

MUSICAL NOTES.

There is no doubt that not only the methods of manufacturing, the lack of science in production, make many New York pianos too high priced, but the real estate investment represented by costly factory structures erected on highly taxed and valuable land adds greatly to an unrecognized cost, says the Musical Courier, of New York. The dealer who is prepared to purchase the goods is not interested in any of the features connected with the production; all he wants is a piano of a definite grade, comparable with its price, and having a name or reputation to justify the handling at that price. He is not interested in the firm nor in the factory, nor in the location.

The rapid increase of real estate values in New York City drove a large colony of piano manufacturers beyond the Harlem River, where now, within the radius of a few miles, several dozen large establishments are located, which could not compete if they were compelled to make investments covering the same extent in the heart of the city.

The movement began years ago. It displayed itself in other places outside of New York City, although the necessity for cheaper locations was and is not manifest to any degree similar to this here, except probably in Chicago. In the latter city Kimball went at once to the very outskirts of the place, his factory having been erected far distant from any built-up locality, although it is now gradually being surrounded by factories and buildings. But it is not, and never will be, in the heart of the city. The same must be said of the buildings of the Chicago Cottage Organ Company, and the Conover Piano Company, which are situated in Chicago relatively about as the Harlem factories are situated to New York proper.

The new Boston factories are all off the line of direct traffic or are in Cambridgeport, across the river—something like the Astoria piano factories. And yet the rapid increase in the value of land and the difficulties of transportation in large cities, the delays in the receipt of material, of shipment and of general traffic on trucks and wagons and the costs connected, all of which must be added to the cost of production, must make the competition more difficult with each year—even in these favored instances.

How then are piano manufacturers to manage when brought into this competition, as they inevitably are, with the makers, say, like the Starr Piano Company at Richmond, Ind.; the A. B. Chase Company at Newark, Ohio; the Brambach Piano Company at Dolgeville, N. Y.; the Wegman Piano Company at Auburn, N. Y.; the Waterloo Company at Waterloo, N. Y.; the Sterling Company at Derby, Conn.; the Brown & Simpson Company at Worcester, Mass.; the Chase Brothers Company at Muskegon, Mich.; or the Shaw Company at Erie, Pa. All these factories are located on railroad lines that bring them in direct contact with all shipping points, and some of them have switches running right into their yards.

Here then is represented a saving of thousands upon thousands of dollars in each case every year, the actual cash being saved. Some years ago, before the rural piano became the equal of the urban piano, the makers in New York and Boston looked with derision upon "country-made" pianos, but this derision has been transformed into respect now, due to such men as Rufus Blake and Ben Starr and Calvin Whitney, and the late Henry Wegman and Harry Raymore and Theo. P. Brown and Alois Brambach, the Chases and a few more, who have more than amply demonstrated that the dealers and the people are not interested in the place of manufacture, not even in the name of the piano, as much as in the piano itself, and who have also shown that rural piano factories can be made successful equally if not better and quicker than costly city factories. Did the failures during or as a result of the panic come with city or country manufacturers? The question answers itself.

What is the expense of running a closed piano factory or a half-time piano factory in a country town compared to such an expense in the heart of New York City? Here is that, gentlemen? Have you ever pondered over that aspect of the case? And probably there are very few in the manufacturing line who will not admit that the half-time piano factory has been very fashionable in New York of late. We wish to put ourselves on record as predicting that it will be much more fashionable here than ever, judging from the manner in which the general piano trade is elevated by the average New York piano manufacturer. We venture to assert definitely and without any kind of reservation that a great majority of the New York piano manufacturers will never again produce as many pianos per annum as they have made in the past per annum.

Competition with the small cities, the Courier is a New York paper, with Chicago, Cincinnati, Boston and even Philadelphia, is impossible on the existing basis. It is an industrial and mercantile impossibility as affairs in conjunction with New York piano building are conducted. The pessimistic New York piano manufacturer is dead already; it is only a question of the funeral with him. The New York piano manufacturer who is living in the hopes that his name will sell his piano when the trade revival reaches us is doomed to the most harrowing kind of disappointment, for he is not even aware that his name on the piano has lost its commercial charm; he does not even know that the West is making better pianos in tone and touch than his own. He, of course, has no future.

There are a few New York piano manufacturers, a limited number, who have a future; but will they be able to hold their own in competition under the tremendous expense of costly city production? That is the vital question. Of course, if they continue in the infatuation that their names have a superior value which compensates for the difference in the cost of production then their doom is also sealed. Some of their pianos are not as good as less known instruments, and in this they are also at a disadvantage; but calling all things equal, is competition possible unless

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cost of production is equal? Can these New York houses, whose future possibilities are admitted, maintain themselves at the present great difference in cost of production against them? Will they not be compelled to remove their plants to locations that will make the instrument pay the profit of existence?

The managers of Steinway Hall are getting up a circular which will contain cuts and plans of the halls and also other information for the use of people who would like to secure a concert hall of that proportion. This hall will rent for \$50 for an afternoon performance or \$75 for an evening performance, which includes also the use of a Steinway piano. It is not an actual necessity that the Steinway piano should be used in this beautiful little concert auditorium, but the decision as to whether another make shall be permitted will remain with Mr. Potter. The larger hall of the two will seat about 800 people.

The smaller hall on the seventh floor can be rented for the sum of \$10 for an afternoon or \$12 for an evening. A discount will be made from these prices where the rooms are required for ten or twenty performances.

The Amateur Musical Club of this city has already engaged Steinway Hall for twenty entertainments for the coming season.

There is an Italian exposition at Hamburg, Germany. An orchestra of seventy musicians belonging to a Bersaglieri regiment of Rome, under Maestro Bellisario Saggi, furnishes the daily promenade concerts. The different squares, streets and restaurants are enlivened by the Orchestra San Carlo, thirty-five musicians, under Professor Della Rosa; the singing chorus of Milan, twenty-five voices, under Professor Scabaglia; the Tarantella Troupes, Nos. 1 and 2, of Naples, eleven and sixteen members respectively; two mandolin and guitar troupes of eleven persons each; bagpipers and dancers under Cocozza; players and female dancers, nine persons, under Luigi Arcari. At the Concert Hall, Binbont, with ninety musicians of the Scala orchestra of Milan, is giving concerts daily.

The Pease Piano Company, of 248 Wabash avenue, has already made quite a start in its new warehouses. Hundreds of people have visited them. Sales have been increasing on account of their splendid location. The popularity of the Pease pianos is increasing. Mr. McDonald, the Vice President of the company, is pleased with the result.

The Hallet and Davis Piano Company, at Jackson street and Wabash avenue, are doing an excellent trade, and have no fault whatever to find with business. Their rooms have been well patronized and sales are increasing.

The business done at Steinway Hall by Messrs. Lyon, Potter & Co., according to all accounts, is something phenomenal. Eight pianos a day is good work for the largest stock which was left down at the old store, 174 Wabash avenue, which store is still being run by Messrs. Lyon, Potter & Co., has been reduced to comparatively few instruments, only the first floor now being occupied for them.

A POLICEMAN FAILS IN HIS JOKE.
Tries to Have Some Fun with His Wife but is Neatly Fooled.

A great deal of amusement was caused on an east-bound electric car the other afternoon by a waggish policeman, who selected his wife for his victim. The policeman had done duty at the ball park, and his wife had been to see the game. While the crowd was leaving the woman stood about the front of the car and waited for her husband to ride up town with him. He finally arrived, and the pair boarded a crowded car. Both were young and only recently married, and they enjoyed themselves hugely on the way.

The woman wore a handsome little gold watch, evidently a present from her husband. While half the people

in the car were looking, and while his wife was speaking to a woman acquaintance outside the car, the policeman deftly took the watch from his wife's pocket and transferred it to his pistol pocket. When the car reached 18th street the policeman remarked that it was a few minutes past 6 o'clock, and everybody in the car looked at the policeman's wife.

Of course she did what everyone in the car expected she would. She felt for her watch. It seemed as if a sudden violent pain had attacked the woman's heart. Her face became very pale and her eyes dilated. Her husband seemed greatly alarmed, and asked her what the matter was. She looked over the crowd in the car like a frightened fawn. It was a full minute before she could speak. Then she whispered in her husband's ear loud enough for the intensely interested spectators to hear: "I have been touched; some one has stolen my watch." Her eyes began to grow dim, and before the policeman could answer a big tear rolled down her cheek and fell into her lap.

"Here is the watch; I was only joking with you," and the policeman felt back for his pocket. Then a look of dismay overspread his face. The watch had disappeared. He felt in first one pocket and then another, and finally turned all his pockets wrong side out. He worked rapidly toward the last and perished a good deal. His wife looked on in open-mouthed astonishment. So did the other people in the car. All had smiled and looked out the windows of the car when the woman first discovered that her watch was gone, but when her husband failed to produce it, after having told her that he had taken it, the people sat upright and watched the hunt for the missing timepiece with great interest.

Finally a quiet-appearing young man, who sat in the rear of the car, arose and handed the watch to the policeman's wife. "I just wanted to teach your husband a lesson," he said. And the crowd of passengers gave vent to a prolonged hearty laugh, and the policeman and his wife finally joined in the merriment, though they were a little slow to appreciate the joke.

SHE WAS TOO NEAT.
And Her Husband Did Not Appreciate It Under Certain Conditions.

The man on the front doorstep had about him such an air of utter woe and desolation that the passing policeman felt it to be his duty to make an inquiry. So, at the risk of bad form, he spoke to him without an introduction.

"What's the matter?" in sympathetic tones.

The man looked up at him disconsolately, and nodded backward. "Domestic infidelity?" inquired the policeman, who had had experience of this kind before. "Yes," said the man sorrowfully. "What's the nature of them?" "Same old thing." "What's that?" "High-tempered wife." "Is that all?" inquired the officer, showing that he felt himself imposed upon. "Ain't that enough?" inquired the husband, ruefully. "Why, that's nothing," said the officer. "High-tempered wives are thick in this neighborhood, and they are really the best kind."

"How?" asked the man with a startled gulp. "They are good workers, and always industrious and thrifty." "Is that so?" inquired the man in doubting Thomas tones. "Of course," continued the officer, "and then they are the neatest women in the world. They won't have it any other way for a minute."

The man sat rubbing his head for some time. "I wonder," he said at last, in the most plaintively inquiring way, "if that is the reason why she always cleans me out every time I try to make her realize that I am the head of the family?"—Detroit Free Press.

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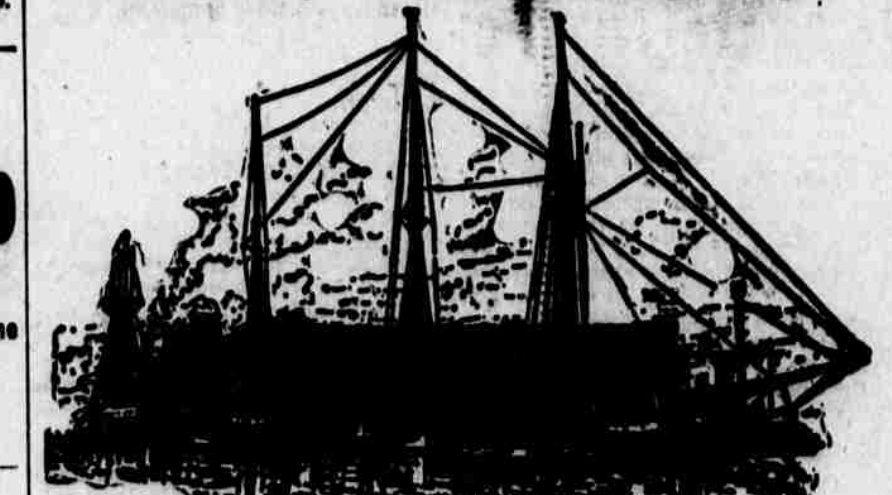
Spring Meeting opens May 18 and runs alternately with Hawthorne every two weeks until November. Purse of \$500 and more. Valuable over-night handicaps, and special races for the season's best attractions. The dates of the spring stakes, which closed Jan. 1, will soon be announced. All the stars of this and other seasons will be in Chicago to compete. \$50,000 National Derby will be run Saturday, June 23.

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